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Heroism and Passion in Literature: Studies in Honour of Moya
Longstaffe (review)

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O'Neill's *Mourning becomes Electra*. I have not sought to mention every contributor by name for a collection which offers a thought-provoking comparatist perspective on the discourse of theatre itself. Inevitably, some repetition was bound to occur. Equally, few readers will wish to read this volume in one go. For those primarily interested in theatre studies who wish, and should, dip in to it, there is, as the saying goes, something for everyone.

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Heroism and Passion in Literature: Studies in Honour of Moya Longstaffe. Edited by GRAHAM GARGETT. (Internationale Forschungen zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Litteraturwissenschaft, 77). Amsterdam — New York, Rodopi, 2004. xii + 282 pp. Pb \$80.00; €64.00.

Moya Longstaffe's estimable body of work is suitably honoured in this volume, which develops the strands with which she linked Corneille, Stendhal and Claudel in *Metamorphoses of Passion and the Heroic* (1999). In the first section, the waning of heroism, and its deviations, in the late seventeenth century are well covered. With his customary mastery, H. T. Barnwell explores Racine's ambiguous use of heroic language and ambivalence towards a 'Roman' concept of heroism in *Bérénice*, and Angela Ryan draws on an impressive range of theoretical perspectives to compare the Racinian Phèdre, within her 'constrained heroic space', with her Euripidean counterpart. John Campbell tracks the shifting view of (heroic) ambition in *La Princesse de Clèves*, Robert McBride the subterfuges and self-deceptions of Molière's comic heroes, and Marité Oubrier presents a biographical evaluation of La Fontaine, debating whether he deliberately positioned himself as 'anti-hero or reluctant hero'. Concurrently with these now canonical figures' questioning of conventional heroism, the increasingly marginalized Huguenot community had a particularly acute need to consider of what stuff heroes were made. An excellent essay by Jane McKee analyses the expression of beleaguered spiritual heroism, mediated through biblical allegory, in Laurence Drelincourt's *Sonnets chrétiens*, where self-reliance and trust in the Creator are not irreconcilable values. The sole eighteenth-century focus is in Graham Gargett's persuasive identification of a new real-life model for Voltaire's 'Ingénu', exploring the 'transformation of heroic noble savage into civilized heroic Frenchman'. For the following century there is Brian Keith-Smith on Wagner in Paris, John McCann on Baudelaire, Anne Judge and Solange Lamothe, in one of relatively few essays to foreground passion, on Stendhal's style, a fascinating note by Henri Godin on the film versions of Maupassant's *Bel-Ami*, and Elizabeth Lillie's fine account of Renan's evolving concept of the intellectual hero and the duty of the 'aristocrat of the mind' to enlighten and guide the masses. A meta-discourse on the heroic figure of the writer as prophet and mediator, present in Baudelaire and Renan, reappears in the final section in Aimé Césaire's vision of the poet as 'heroic creator of a new myth' expertly reviewed by Angela Chambers and in Stanley Black's deft analysis of Juan Goytisola's metafiction. Less ambitious figures feature in essays by John Gillespie, Gerard M. Macklin and Pól Ó Dochartaigh on, respectively, Camus's flawed heroes, Beckett's

implication that heroism consists in not succumbing to despair, and Jurek Becker's unremarkable Jewish anti-heroes who run counter to GDR social and literary myth-making. There are also contributions by Marie-Joséphine Whitaker on Rimbaud's passion for travel, Alan Gabbey on Péguy's reading of Descartes and Philip Taylor on dissidence within French Communism. Five essays on non-French figures — Wagner, the anti-Nazi Adam von Trott, Evelyn Waugh, Goytisolo and Becker — introduce a broader European dimension. As is the way of *mélanges*, one or two contributions are rather tenuously connected to the prescribed themes, but this volume, through its close-focus analyses and Graham Gargett's excellent introduction, makes a valuable contribution to charting the fluctuations of the heroic ideal.

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The Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy. Edited by JOHN PROTEVI.
Edinburgh University Press, 2005. xii + 628 pp. Hb £70.00. Pb £25.00.

The *Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy* is a very welcome complement to the *Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy*. The *Dictionary* contains quick, clear and cross-referenced orientations on particular terms, philosophers and theorists associated with the Continental tradition. And the entries are of widely differing length, ranging from six or seven pages for Marxism, Derrida and Kant to half a page each for *pharmakon*, rhizome, chiasm, and Romantic irony. The choice of entries is perhaps slightly idiosyncratic: Jean-Luc Nancy gets an entry, but Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe does not. Nor does Lévi-Strauss — subsumed under Structuralism, or Gayatri Spivak or Edward W. Said — both included under Post-colonial theory, whereas Ed Casey, John Sallis and John Caputo, all US academics, merit over a page each. This probably reflects the (unintentional?) American bias of the *Dictionary*, for out of the 100-odd contributors, over seventy-five are from the United States, as is the editor, John Protevi. An unusual feature of the *Dictionary* is its occasional multiple entries for the same term: Absurdity, for example, gets entries from both George Pattison, who concentrates on Kierkegaard, and Will McBride, whose focus is primarily Camus; and Alienation has three entries, which focus respectively on Hegel and Marx, on Heidegger and Sartre, and on Simone de Beauvoir. I enjoyed browsing through this *Dictionary* enormously; it introduced me to several thinkers with whom I was unfamiliar, such as — to reveal my ignorance, perhaps unwisely — Gilbert Simondon ('French philosopher of technology and inspiration for Deleuze'), the Russian Pavel Florensky ('arguably Russia's most important philosopher') and the Chilean Francisco Varela ('best-known as the co-originator of the theory of auto-poiesis with Humberto Maturana'). Such are the real aleatory pleasures of dictionaries. My one major quibble is the total lack of any kind of index. I hope a future edition will plug this very noticeable gap; the book would gain significantly in usefulness and useability if it had one.

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